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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A process for preparing high-concentration gaseous formaldehyde having a molar  $\text{CH}_2\text{O} : \text{H}_2\text{O}$  ratio of  $\geq 0.6$  from an aqueous formaldehyde solution by evaporation of at least part of the solution, in which the aqueous formaldehyde solution is heated to a evaporation temperature T and the gas phase formed is taken off, wherein the evaporation temperature T obeys the relationship:

$$T [^{\circ}\text{C}] \geq T'_{\min} [^{\circ}\text{C}]$$

where  $T'_{\min}(c) = A + B \times (c/100) + C \times (c/100)^2 + D \times (c/100)^3$

and

$A = + 68.759$ ,  $B = + 124.77$ ,  $C = - 12.851$ ,  $D = - 10.095$ ,

where c is the instantaneous  $\text{CH}_2\text{O}$  content of the aqueous formaldehyde solution during the evaporation in percent by weight and is from 20 to 99% by weight.

2. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the aqueous formaldehyde solution used as starting material in the process has  $\text{CH}_2\text{O}$  content of from 50 to 99% by weight.

3. (Original) A process as claimed in claim 2, wherein the aqueous formaldehyde solution has  $\text{CH}_2\text{O}$  content of from 70 to 90% by weight.

4. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the pressure during the evaporation is from 0.1 to 50 bar.

5. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, wherein the molar  $\text{CH}_2\text{O} : \text{H}_2\text{O}$  ratio is  $\geq 1.4$ .

6. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in any of ~~claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein a temperature which obeys the relationship

$$T [^{\circ}\text{C}] \geq T''_{\min} [^{\circ}\text{C}]$$

where  $T^2_{\min}(c) = A' + B' \times (c/100) + C' \times (c/100)^2 + D' \times (c/100)^3$

and

$A' = + 6.0156$ ,  $B' = + 52.918$ ,  $C' = + 49.699$ ,  $D' = + 34.286$ ,

where  $c$  is the instantaneous  $\text{CH}_2\text{O}$  content of the aqueous formaldehyde solution during the evaporation in percent by weight and is from 20 to 99% by weight, is maintained in the aqueous formaldehyde solution at every point in the evaporator.

7. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the evaporation is carried out in a stirred vessel, a helical tube, a film evaporator or another apparatus having heat exchanger characteristics.

8. (Currently amended) A process as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1, wherein the aqueous formaldehyde solution used as starting material in the process is prepared by oxidative dehydrogenation of methanol.

9. (Canceled)